



United States  
**Department of Agriculture**

Office of the Chief Information Officer

DN 3300-015

Commercial Wireless Technologies in USDA – Asset Management

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

<b>DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE</b>		<b>Number:</b> 3300-015
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Commercial Wireless Technologies in USDA – Asset Management	<b>DATE:</b> April 20, 2006	
	<b>OPI:</b> Office of the Chief Information Officer, Telecommunications Management Division	
<b>CODIFICATION/EXPIRATION:</b> This Notice will expire one year from the date it is signed, unless rescinded or canceled earlier.		

1 PURPOSE

This Departmental Notice (DN) defines the roles and responsibilities of US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agencies and Staff Offices in establishing best practices asset-tracking systems for improving the management and control of telecommunications equipment and services (airtime). It is intended to provide preliminary guidance during the early stages of planning for future asset management activities by the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO).

2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

This DN replaces DN 3300-015 dated May 17, 2005 and will be incorporated in the Departmental Manual DM 3300 within the next six months.

3 POLICY

This DN serves as interim policy to address requirements by the Clinger Cohen Act of 1996 and other Federal legislation for accountability of information technology assets, including telecommunications wireless equipment and services. USDA Agencies and Staff Offices will establish asset management systems for wireless systems within one year from the effective date of this Notice according to the procedures, roles and responsibilities found in Section 7. Requirements to track commercial wireless assets shall leverage existing asset management systems for non-wireless telecommunications products and services. Over the course of the next year, OCIO will work with Agencies and Staff Offices that do not have adequate wireless telecommunications asset-tracking systems already in place to explore tools for data storage and reporting of wireless assets.

#### 4 BACKGROUND

During the course of the past year, OCIO asked Agencies and Staff Offices to self-report active accounts for commercial wireless services. OCIO then approached the top three wireless vendors that provide USDA with commercial wireless services as identified through internal financial reports and asked for Department wide summary reports of active accounts. Findings showed that wide discrepancies existed between what Agencies and Staff Offices and vendors report, with vendors reporting exponentially more active accounts. These results indicate that Agencies and Staff Offices do not have the effective controls in place needed to report accurate inventories of wireless assets. Improvement is needed at all levels of the organization.

The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 requires the development and maintenance of an asset management system for accountable and effective management of Information Technology. The ability to produce an accurate inventory of commercial wireless equipment and services will be the first step towards meeting that goal. Proper asset management will allow USDA Agencies and Staff Offices to reconcile billing reports with existing inventory of commercial wireless equipment and services, potentially saving money and improving accountability.

#### 5 SCOPE

This notice applies to all USDA agency and staff office personnel, including non-government personnel authorized to use USDA wireless networks.

It applies to all commercial wireless devices, services and technologies that transmit voice and data including video. This also includes portable electronic devices (PED) such as laptop computers with wireless capability, cellular/personal communications system (PCS) devices, personal digital assistants (PDA), paging devices, Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFID), fixed telemetry devices, and any other commercial wireless devices capable of storing, processing, or transmitting information. Services include Wireless Local Area Network (LAN), Wireless Wide Area Network (WWAN), and Personal Area Network (PAN). This policy does not address classified communications.

#### 6 REFERENCES

US Congress, *Information Technology Management Reform Act (ITMRA or the Clinger-Cohen Act)*. 1996.

US Congress, *Chief Financial Officers Act of 1996*.

US Congress, *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996*.

US Congress, *Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act of 1982*.

US Congress, *Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995*.

US Congress, *Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994*.

USDA, DR 3080-001 (previously DR3040-002) – *Records Management*.

USDA, Agricultural Property Management Regulations Chapter 110-36, *Disposition of Excess Personal Property* and Chapter 110-37 *Donation of Surplus Personal Property*.

OMB, Circular No. A-11, *Preparation, submission and execution of Budget*.

## 7 DEFINITIONS

- a Asset Management. A process whereby equipment and services are tracked during their life cycles, generally using an inventory database. The inventory database should have the ability to provide detailed and summary reports on what the organization purchases or owns at any given moment in time.
- b Commercial Wireless Devices. Devices, services, and technologies commercially procured and intended for use in commercial and unlicensed frequency bands.
- c Designated Agency Representative (DAR) - DARs are designated by the Chief Information Officer or the lead Information Technology Officer within each agency or staff office in coordination with the agency/staff office Telecommunications Mission Area Control Officer (TMACO). DARs are delegated authority under USDA's Departmental Regulation 3300-001 to place orders for telecommunications products and services on behalf of the agencies or staff offices they represent. Telecommunications Services and Operations within the Office of the Chief Information Officer establishes ordering limitations and guidance for USDA DARs within the context of authorized, pre-existing contracts that clearly state delegations of authority and terms. In order to be authorized to place orders, DARs must complete vendor training associated with a General Services Administration (GSA) contract (e.g. FTS2001/Networx).
- d Telecommunications Assets – Telecommunications equipment and services providing voice and data transmission across a broad range of media, including wireless technologies.
- e Telecommunications Mission Area Control Officers (TMACOs) - A senior telecommunications manager designated to have both responsibility and authority to acquire mission area/agency network access telecommunications services and equipment; to ensure and maintain proper business case documentation; and, to commit the mission area/agency to multi agency site solutions. TMACOs are required to be certified by the Office of the Chief Information Officer.
- f Wireless Equipment/Devices. Physical hardware capable of transmitting or receiving information across a wireless medium.

## 8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### a OCIO-TSO will:

- (1) Recommend alternatives for establishing a USDA asset management system for wireless technologies within one year from the effective date of this DN.
- (2) Assist USDA Agencies and Staff Offices in establishing asset management systems for wireless technologies that are capable of exchanging data with a USDA asset management system in the future. Asset tracking options could include:
  - (a) An asset management Service Level Agreement (SLA) with a third party vendor;
  - (b) Asset tracking services provided by the General Services Administration (GSA);
  - (c) An agreement to partner with other USDA agencies to share the use of an existing asset management system; or
  - (d) The use of spreadsheets.
- (3) Conduct annual analyses and reports on Department wide wireless expenditures to establish baseline spending, serve as a basis to negotiate Department-level Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA)s, and align service delivery.

### b Agencies and Staff Offices will:

- (1) Establish an asset tracking process for all wireless equipment and services, within one year from the effective date of this Notice. USDA agencies and staff offices shall establish a central inventory system according to USDA policies and procedures administered by the USDA Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO). USDA general guidelines for personal property state that:

USDA owned personal property with an acquisition cost that exceeds \$5K and all leased property regardless of acquisition cost; or property that is deemed to be sensitive by the Property Management Officer under \$5K; is considered to be accountable personal property. USDA personal property that exceeds \$25K must be capitalized. All other personal property is classified as nonaccountable [OCFO].

Procedures must be established to regularly update the inventory with additions, deletions, and changes to ensure accuracy and completeness.

- (2) Comply with "Agricultural Property Management Regulations: Contents of Subchapter N – Property Management: Part 104 – 50 Property Management: 104 – 51.110 Control of Nonaccountable Property" which states:

Agencies shall be responsible for maintaining reasonable controls over their nonaccountable property to safeguard it against improper use, theft and undue deterioration. Records and other documentation relative to nonaccountable property shall be kept to the minimum required to provide essential management information.

- (3) Comply with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) guidance on "Telephone Use (Call Detail) Records" for all accountable and nonaccountable wireless telecommunications assets. NARA guidance will provide the minimal requirements for nonaccountable property. USDA also recommends additional fields of information. NARA guidance and USDA recommendations follow below:

NARA

Initial reports of use of telephone lines (e.g., telephone calls, facsimile transmissions and electronic mail) during a specified period provided by a telephone company, the General Services Administration, the Defense Information Systems Agency, or a private sector exchange on an agency's premises, as well as records generated from initial reports from administrative, technical, or investigative follow-up. Included is such information as the originating number, destination number, destination city and state, date and time of use, duration of the use, and the estimated or actual cost of the use. EXCLUDED are records accumulated in connection with substantive investigations and audits that are covered by GRS 22, Inspector General Records or GRS 6, Accountable Officers' Accounts Records.

Destroy when 3 years old. Initial reports may be destroyed earlier if the information needed to identify abuse has been captured in other records [NARA].

USDA

USDA recommends that minimal records also include carrier, plan, brand name, model name, model number, serial number, owner, location (e.g., E911 address), initial cost, service type, billing account number, service contract type, service contract length, method of recurring payment, and documentation of quality of service problems.

- (4) Establish and enforce procedures that require supervisors to request and review wireless bills monthly for each employee issued a wireless device, where the device is subject to recurring service fees. Supervisors should initial the monthly billing statements certifying that:

(e) The bills are accurate.

(f) Individual plans are effective.

1 Usage should not exceed the monthly plan allowance.

2 Monthly charges that routinely exceed the monthly plan allowance should be adjusted

by the Agency or Staff Office DAR or TMACO with the approval of the employee's supervisor.

- 3 The monthly plan allowance should not routinely exceed the monthly charges by a significant amount.
    - 4 Monthly plan allowances that routinely exceed the monthly charges by a significant amount should be adjusted by the Agency or Staff Office DAR or TMACO at the request of the employee's supervisor.
- (5) Establish procedures by which TMACOs and DARs annually review wireless usage throughout the Agency(ies) or Staff Office(s) they support, and adjust usage plans to achieve the maximum benefit. For example, an Agency or Staff Office may consider the creation of a loaner pool of wireless devices for distribution to employees on an as needed basis, as opposed to the permanent assignment of these devices to individual employees.
- (6) Establish procedures to ensure that upon employee termination, government owned wireless assets are returned to the Agency or Staff Office and that services are discontinued or reassigned to another employee or contractor. Procedures must require that the Agency TMACO or DAR make the necessary changes or deletions to records in the appropriate billing system(s).
- (7) Establish procedures to ensure that upon office closure or relocation, the agency TMACO or DAR enters the necessary modifications, changes or deletions for recurring service charges into the appropriate systems or submits them to the appropriate organizations.
- (8) Establish procedures to ensure that upon office closure or relocation, government owned wireless assets are moved or properly disposed.
  - (a) Procedures for disposition of wireless assets are outlined in the Agricultural Property Management Regulations Chapter 110-36, *Disposition of Excess Personal Property* and Chapter 110-37 *Donation of Surplus Personal Property*.
  - (b) Prior to disposition:
    - 1 Use DoD approved software to delete all sensitive files and data.
    - 2 Clear configuration settings.
- (9) Perform capital planning and budget control management responsibilities in accordance with USDA Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) processes and OMB Circular A-11, Exhibit 300 guidelines. USDA CPIC guidelines can be found on the USDA OCIO Information Resources Management (IRM) Website at:

[http://www.ocio.usda.gov/irm/cap\\_plan/index.html](http://www.ocio.usda.gov/irm/cap_plan/index.html)

IRM requires that Agencies and Staff Offices utilize a web-based, automation tool to submit and record financial and project management information.



## 9 INQUIRIES

Direct all questions concerning this notice to the Telecommunications Policy and Planning Division (TPPD), Telecommunications Services and Operations, Office of the Chief Information Officer.